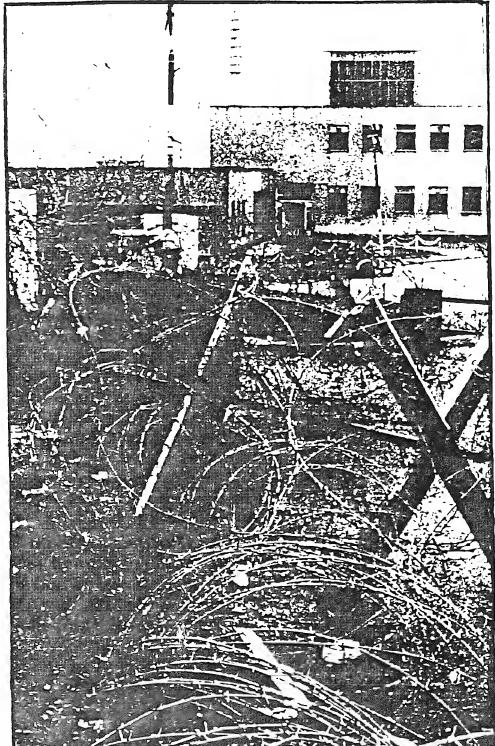


# COUNTER INFORMATION



**BARBED WIRE AT "BELSEN GLEN"**

## BILSTON GLEN

ACTION is needed to stop the transport of coal out of Bilston Glen colliery in the Lothians and to strengthen the strike there.

During November the number of strike-breakers jumped from around 100 to about 600, over a third of the workforce. By early December the return to work had slowed drastically, to a trickle - but the NCB have been stepping up the transport of coal out of the pit.

They started with deliveries to hospitals, using strikebreaking NCB lorry drivers. Now coal is being transported to schools, coal merchants depots, and other unknown destinations. Several private contractors are involved, including Bruce Lindsey Waldie of Haymarket, Edinburgh. From depots the coal could be taken to industry and power stations. If the NCB get away with taking coal out of Bilston Glen they will be more confident about doing the same at other strikebound pits.

The present small pickets have only been able to turn back a few lorries. Local strikers have wanted MASS pickets. Both the Scottish N.U.M. leadership - McGahey, Bolton & co. have been OBSTRUCTING their wishes. The mining communities themselves need to take over the running of the strike at a GRASSROOTS level, co-ordinating with other areas, and ignoring the leadership.

All is not lost at Bilston Glen. Some strike-breakers have RE-JOINED the strike, possib-

ly disgusted at the MILITARISATION of the pit - security men with dogs stand guard within the colliery buildings, doors everywhere are locked and bolted. But the local strikers do NEED PHYSICAL SOLIDARITY from other areas, eg Fife and Ayrshire, where the strike is still solid. And the strike needs to go back onto the OFFENSIVE, the struggle needs to be spread into other industries and areas of society.

This happened when from 20th November janitors at LASSWADE high School refused to accept SCAB-coal from Bilston Glen. The janitors were suspended and then came out on STRIKE. Teachers came out on an UN-OFFICIAL 24 hour strike in SOLIDARITY. The school was shut down for several days.

The action spread when the janitor at the local Further Education College also REFUSED to accept the coal. He was suspended and the college shut down. Unfortunately other school janitors in Midlothian didn't take up the struggle and the Lasswade janitors became ISOLATED.

However, at the time of writing (10-12), it's reported that 58 schools in AYRSHIRE have closed due to a lack of coal. Having an impact beyond the coal industry like this is VITAL. And while obviously hospitals should be supplied with coal, let no one say that the indoctrination centres known as schools are not worthy candidates for CLOSURE! Info miners at Loanhead. The Scotsman 21-23-11. Socialist Worker 1-12. Radio Scotland News 10-12.

### A COMMUNITY OF STRUGGLE

One of the most positive aspects of the miners strike is the tremendous involvement of women in the struggle. Not only in the food kitchens, but on the picket lines, organising, speaking at meetings.

Talking about this development, Mrs Barbara Jeffrey of the Wives Support Group in Leicestershire has said, "At one time I never read political stories in a newspaper. We all take a keen interest now. In South Derbyshire, the wives of a small group of striking miners actually vote with the men" (Guardian 26-11).

This direct involvement by women in taking decisions is extremely important. The women are fully involved in the struggle, so WHY shouldn't they have an EQUAL SAY with the men?

In the miners strike there could be regular meetings in all areas, in which everyone - miners, women, unemployed, school students, other workers - could participate in deciding

how to take the struggle forward - this sort of thing HAS happened before. For example, during the 1980 STEELWORKERS strike in Caldicott on the Welsh border, mass meetings were held every week in a local



club. The whole community discussed the STRATEGY for picketing and advancing the strike. Everyone took part in making DECISIONS, joining in the ACTIONS decided on. Similar forms of organisation were created in the PLESSEYS and Fisher Bendix factory occupations in 1972 and in the Barcelona Docks in 1979 in Spain.

To organise in this way will generally mean going against official trade union opposition. This might seem a big step, but it's a vital one if we're not to be led like sheep to yet more defeats.

**DON'T LET THEM THROUGH!**  
The seab firm Yuill and Dodds, joined by a host of others from Musselburgh to Motherwell have been involved in increased transportation of coal from Hunterston to Ravenscraig. The community protests in Barrhead caused them to divert the convoy and they now stream through Pollok at 50mph, travelling four at a time through a huge Glasgow South-Western housing estate before joining the motorway at Bellahouston.

FORGET THE T.U.C.!  
DESPITE all the evidence of history, from the general strike in 1926, the firemen's and lorrydrivers strikes under the last Labour Government, and so on, N.U.M. leaders are still wasting their time with appeals to the T.U.C. to actively support the strike, and in particular the action of miners to defy the law in pursuit of class justice.

The T.U.C. leaders for the most part are worse than people who "sit on the fence"-they ARE the fence! They trade in the loyalty of ordinary workers moved by the class instinct of brotherly and sisterly solidarity. Kinnock and his Labour Party chums use similar tricks. But people are seeing through this.

What is crucial at this stage of the strike is that other workers are mobilised to actively support the strike. This can only be done by direct appeals to workers on the shopfloor, to the unemployed in the streets during collections. Only then will ordinary people put CLASS interest before personal interest. To rely on the Union leaders, even in the N.U.M to get a response by cosy chats in plush union offices, will never achieve our aim. The victory of miners can only be achieved by the widespread and determined involvement of the working class.

## **SCAB FIRMS OCCUPIED**

THE disgusting activities of the Halifax Building Society, threatening striking mining families with eviction because they can't pay their mortgage, are not going unopposed.

On November 5th, 15 people occupied the main branch of the Halifax in Bradford. Others leafleted outside and the local radio reported the action.

On the same day in Manchester, Price Waterhouse got similar treatment. After a 7 hour picket their offices were invaded by people protesting against their heavy involvement in the plundering of miners and N.U.M. funds on behalf of the courts.

There were no arrests.



The sequestrators on a pilgrimage to find the missing Union funds. They'll go to great lengths to track the last penny down!

# **HERE WE GO!**



THE RECENT all out effort by the Government and the NCB to break the strike by pressurising miners to return to work was fiercely RESISTED in Yorkshire and South Wales. Here we list some of the courageous and imaginative actions taken by pickets in a period of just 9 days in November.

November 12th: South Yorkshire. Metal sight screens from the village cricket field are used in the construction of burning barricades which block the road into Cortonwood Pit. Mounted police charge, pickets hurl missiles at the police. At Dinnington police are driven out of their station. Dozens of street lamps are ripped down to form barricades. Groups of people break into shops and liberate goods. The Maltby police-station is attacked.

## **INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

FRENCH coal miners are taking direct action to stop the transport of coal to Britain. On the 22nd November at Calais, miners unloaded 1,000 tons of coal from railway wagons and dumped it on the tracks.

Meanwhile in Denmark, dockers picketed the entrance to the port of Aarhus in an attempt to stop scab lorry drivers from moving South African coal on to the British ship "Militence", which was to take coal to Britain.

[Info: BBC Radio News 22-11;  
Black Flag, 13-11].

**RIOTS AT SPANISH SHIPYARDS.** Workers in Bilbao in the north and Cadiz in the south have been involved in bitter opposition to the "Socialist" Government's plans to impose layoffs and new work practices at the yards. Buses have been burned and used as barricades as running street battles have erupted. Sounds familiar!

WOMENS PICKET

**SOME WOMEN** in Edinburgh are hoping to organise, together with women from the Lothian mining communities, a womens' picket at a local pit. If interested write to: Little by Little, Box A, 43 Candlemaker Row, EDINBURGH.

**COUNTER-INFORMATION.** Rush reports of miners and workers resistance to Box 81, First of May, 43 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh. This issue put together by anarchists from Glasgow & Edinburgh.

Nov. 15th: A group of 40-100 pickets in cars speed through the gates of Savile Pit in Leeds. They jump out, smash windows, dive back into their cars and drive off. No arrests. Burning barricades at Goldthorpe Colliery in South Yorkshire.

Nov. 16th: Barricades set ablaze at Frickley and Treeton Collieries in S. Yorkshire.

Nov. 19th: At Cynheidre Colliery in South Wales about 20 women from the mining community break into the colliery offices during the night and occupy them to try to disrupt work at the colliery. In Yorkshire, miners build barricades to block the way into Wheldale Colliery. At Frysoton, lamp-posts & uprooted telegraph poles block the roads. Pickets push railway wagons on to a level crossing at Sharlston near Wakefield to cut off the approach to the village pit. During the night "hit Squads" attack the NCB geological research centre at Connishborough, taking out microprocessing equipment and other machinery causing £200,000 worth of damage.

Nov. 20th: Pickets seal off Wheldale Pit in Castleford with 2 blazing bonfires and ~~said~~ siding barricades of lamp standards and ~~one~~ drums. From the early hours till 9am, ~~150~~ striking miners control the area. The police, presumably tied up at other pits, are nowhere to be seen. By the time the police show up and dismantle the barricades. The 6 scabs are 3 hours late for work.

## **N.C.B. ATTACK PE NSIONERS & THE SICK**

**THE COAL BOARD** are obstructing the delivery of coal to pensioners and sick people in the Lothians and are trying to blame striking miners for the situation.

Till recently the Strike Committees organised the delivery of coal to such needy people, without any problems. But with an increase in strikebreakers at Bilston Glen the N.C.B. have started transporting coal out of the colliery when and where they want, without going through the Strike Committees.

Now the N.C.B. are trying to start the same strikebreaking operation at nearby Monktonhall Colliery. They're using scab N.C.B. lorry drivers to transport coal from Blindwells open cast mine near Prestopans to Monktonhall, and then trying to use that coal for pensioners, etc. This is also breaking the ban on the transport of coal out of the open cast mines imposed by the open cast miners during the current dispute with their own employers.